



State of Wisconsin GOVERNOR'S STATE TRAILS COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 13, 2014

Hausmann Nature Center
Kettle Moraine State Forest - Lapham Peak Unit
W329 N846 County Road C
Delafield, WI 53018
10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

State Trails Council Members present:

Randy Harden, ATV/UTV representative (member of *Wisconsin ATV Association*)
Doug Johnson, snowmobiling representative (member of *Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs* [STC Secretary])
Phil Johnsrud, non-motorized water trails representative [STC Vice Chair]
Mike McFadzen, cross-country skiing representative (member of *WI Nordic Network, Northern Kettle Moraine Nordic Ski Club*)
Bryan Much, off-highway motorcycle representative (member of *Wisconsin Off-Highway Motorcycle Association* [STC Chair])
Ken Neitzke, hiking representative (member of *Ice Age Trail Alliance*)
Luana Schneider, 4-wheel drive vehicles representative (member of *Wisconsin 4-Wheel Drive Association*)
John Siegert, off-road bicycling representative (member of *Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin*)
Robbie Webber, bicycling representative (member of *Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin*)
Jim White, boards and small wheels representative

State Trails Council Members not in attendance

Skip Maletzke, tourism/business representative [non-voting]
Leif Hubbard, *Wisconsin Department of Transportation* [non-voting]

Others present

Kricket Jewett; (*Wisconsin Horse Council*)
Jim Webber; (*River Valley Trails*)
Hank Wozniel; (*Wisconsin ATV-UTV Association*)
Ada Duffey; (*Southern Kettle Moraine Horse Trail Association; Glacial Drumlin Horse Trail Association*)
Alex Bub; (*Wisconsin Off-Highway Motorcycle Association*)
Jason Wilke; (*Waukesha County Parks*)
Anne Riendl; (*Lapham Peak - Wisconsin Nordic Network*)
Rod Bartlow; (*Ice Age Trail Alliance*)
Julian Kegel; (*Wheel and Sprocket; Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin*)

WI DNR Staff present:

Anne Korman, Mike Repyak, Peter Biermeier, Brigit Brown, Daniel Buckler

10:02 A.M. – Welcome and introductions

- Much called the meeting to order. He thanked Neitzke for finding and reserving the meeting site. Much noted that Kricket Jewett's equestrian application is still going through the approval process. That is hoped to be completed by the next meeting in January.



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10:06 A.M. – Agenda review/repair and approval of July meeting minutes

- Schneider noted that the town mentioned in her July member report should have been called Mole Lake. Siegert motioned to approve the July minutes with Schneider's edit. Neitzke seconded. Motion approved.

10:06 A.M. – Chair Report

- Before the Chair reported, White brought up an issue with the meeting's agenda, saying there wasn't a long enough time for public comment. Much assured him that the Council would not cut short the comments from the public. White was satisfied.
- Much then noted that draft minutes were going to be posted online within a few weeks of each meeting so that members and the public could follow Council activities in a more timely manner. Council members will have an opportunity for review before they are posted online.
- Schneider asked if there was an update on the Kohler issue discussed during the July meeting. Much said that the commenters were referred to the DNR for discussion and that she should ask the DNR during their report later in the meeting.

10:10 A.M. – Bicycling application review and Council vote

- Siegert spoke for the bicycling application subcommittee and recommended Julian Kegel to be selected as the new STC representative for bicycle touring / rail trail bicycling / road bicycling. Siegert noted that Kegel has close relationship with Wheel and Sprocket and has supported thousands of riders at different events. Schneider mentioned that it was a great list of applications and was very difficult to pin down one candidate to recommend. Kegel won their recommendation because of his connection to the users he would be charged with representing.
- Harden pointed out that Jason Wilke's recommendations were very strong and that he had good connections too. Harden said that Wilke's application should receive consideration.
- Webber arrived at the meeting and brought a recommendation letter for Kegel from David Schlabowske of the Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin. There was a technical problem and had not been sent until that morning. Webber then voiced her support for Kegel.
- Harden asked if the subcommittee had contacted people directly. They had not. Much requested that the two main candidates (and who were both present) introduce themselves and say why they should be the new bicycling representative.
- Wilke and Kegel introduced themselves and discussed their experiences and contact with users.
- McFadzen said that he closely looks at who is making the recommendations. Wilke had very strong recommendations, but Kegel received the recommendation from the Bike Fed and that tipped it in his favor.
- Much called for a secret ballot between the two candidates, and while that was being prepared, the Council would tackle the 2015 meeting schedule.

10:38 A.M. – Scheduling next year's meetings

- Meeting dates for 2015 were tentatively scheduled for January 12 (conference call), April 27, August 7 and November 12.

10:43 A.M. – Council vote on bicycling applications

- A secret ballot was held to choose the bicycling representative to be recommended to the governor for appointment. The results were four votes for Kegel, four votes for Wilke and two abstentions.
- White motioned to submit both names to the governor's office. McFadzen seconded. Motion approved.

10:48 A.M. – Election of officers



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- Buckler updated Council on nominees for STC officer positions for 2015. These were Much for Chair, Neitzke for Vice-Chair and Schneider for Secretary. Neitzke took his name out of consideration for Vice-Chair because of new employment with the DNR.
- Buckler called for new nominees for any position. McFadzen nominated Siegert for Vice-Chair and Much seconded the nomination. No other nominees for any position were offered. The nominees were Much for Chair, Siegert for Vice-Chair and Schneider for Secretary.
- McFadzen motioned to lump all three nominees together and vote on them all at once. White seconded. Motion approved.
- All voted in favor of the nominee slate.

10:53 A.M. – Biennial review of user groups with regard to council structure

- Much introduced the topic as a result of an intensive ad hoc committee report released in 2009 to review current trail trends and discuss the need to incorporate other user groups into the STC structure.
- Harden asked about fat bikes. Webber and Siegert said that though it is growing very quickly in popularity, it should still fit within off-road bicycling.
- Much went through the structure of the council and brought up the trail uses they are charged to represent.
- Harden asked present DNR staff if they had seen any change in users and user groups. Besides minor shifts in uses, DNR staff had not seen anything very different.
- It was decided not to change the structure of the Council.
- White said that he had not seen the report that Much had referenced. Much explained the process that the ad hoc committee went through. White raised concerns that the public does not know the structure of the Council. Buckler said that there should not be a problem putting some of the report online. The report, as approved by the STC, will be reposted to the STC Web page.

11:06 A.M. – Update on new statute regarding motorized access on state land

- Biermeier introduced the topic of inventorying roads on all Department lands. He said that in the 2013-15 state budget, language was crafted directing the Department to inventory all Department owned roads as well as the condition of those roads to create a map identifying public use. He then read the state statute which defines a process to inventory, evaluate and plan future motorized access on Department roads (S. 23.116, Wis. Stats.).
- Biermeier said that everything would be done in accordance with Chapter NR44, Wis. Admin. Code, which outlines planning efforts.
- Biermeier reported that a road planning team has been formed which will lead this process for the Department. They are charged with things such as defining what constitutes a road and what types of road types exist. A separate, technical team is charged with inventorying all of the roads. The desire is for each property to have maps of roads which include all of the pertinent information related to what uses are allowed and when.
- Biermeier said he had been asked why the legislature has written this statute. He responds that he is unsure, but one answer is probably transparency. Making that information available to the public is very important, as well as having it more easily accessible through physical and digital maps. He reiterated that the DNR is only at the beginning of the process and the ecological and economic aspects of the project have not been assessed yet. He said the goal is to have the project completed by the end of 2015 and that he would return to the STC multiple times throughout the year to give updates.
- Much said that the issue is very important to his user group and that they want to be involved in the process. He expressed concern that the system would be like that of roads on National Forest lands which have been inventoried. Now the United State Forest Service might be closing roads due to budget reasons. He does not want a similar thing in Wisconsin in which the DNR just shuts down roads based on a few classifications, especially considering most of the roads these user groups are using are those requiring the least maintenance and least money. Biermeier said that it will be done on



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an individual road basis. He could not say whether roads will be opened or closed, only that there would be a consistent system. He said he would give an update to the STC during the January conference call.

- Schneider mirrored Much's concerns, adding that the four-wheel drive community is also very interested in primitive, naturally surfaced and narrow roads, but over 52" wide.
- McFadzen said that this is an important issue to all users, whether they are motorized or nonmotorized, and the DNR should provide updates at every meeting. McFadzen also asked about how that affects master plan. Biermeier said that the master plan will still be the key document on policies for lands, but that the way they address roads in master plans would take this inventory into consideration. Biermeier reiterated that everything would still have to be in compliance with the master plan.
- White expressed concern about the definition of a trail and a road and said that what had been considered a trail to people might suddenly become a road during this process. Biermeier said that one of the first steps of this process was to define a road and hopefully the DNR can give an update in January.

11:37 A.M. – DNR Report

- Biermeier said that the Natural Resources Board approved the Lake Michigan State Water Trail and that Brigit and others have been working on a water trails program.
- He provided an update on master planning activities, including those of the Mukwonago River Unit of the Kettle Moraine State Forest, Sauk Prairie Recreation Area, Driftless area streams, and the Lower Wisconsin State Waterway.
- Buckler mentioned a small, generic poster being developed to be displayed in parks or along trails where trees are being removed, whether it is for safety reasons, timber harvest or any other reason.
- Schneider asked if there were updates to the Kohler golf course issue discussed in the July meeting. Biermeier replied that, to his understanding, the DNR has submitted to Kohler a list of issues that would need to be addressed before they could approve of any plans. He believes that Kohler is preparing a response to those. The Town of Wilson would have to rezone the land and the DNR could not offer any permits unless that was completed.

11:58 A.M. – Lunch

12:22 P.M. – Recreation Trails Program update

- Diane Conklin administers the recreation trails program and gave an update to the Council saying that in 2014 there were 92 projects on the table, of which about 42 were funded.
- With regard to motorized projects, many were funded with old money and now \$400,000 in 2014-15 motorized funds is available with no project on which to spend the money. However, there is a proposed 34 acre acquisition in Adams County where they were originally going to spend Motorized Stewardship funds. The project had the 20% of county funding they were willing to put forward, and the County received a letter of retroactivity from the DNR saying they could go ahead and buy that property with no guarantee of grants unless they reached that 20% funding level. They did reach the 20% level, but now it appears that, to use Motorized Stewardship funds, the property would have to serve the five nature based recreational activities required for Stewardship funds: hunting, fishing, trapping, cross-country skiing and hiking. Conklin could not see the compatibility of those categories on this property. Conklin requested the STC to consider voting to make an exception in the motorized category to their normal \$45,000 project cap in order to provide additional funding for this specific project. Conklin further elaborates that many miles of trails in the area were lost when Plum Creek Timber sold some of their land where trails were located, and other parcels were impacted by timber harvests.
- The DNR would like to switch funding from Motorized Stewardship funds and instead pay for the project with a combination of Recreational Trail Program funds (overseen by STC), Off Highway



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Vehicle Advisory Council (ORV) funds and Adams County. The total project cost would be \$249,900, with 50% (\$124,950) coming the Rec Trails program, 30% (\$74,970) from the ORV program and 20% (\$49,980) from Adams County. Conklin said that the DNR is looking for one-time exception to the \$45,000 cap normally put on motorized projects. She thought it reasonable because no other projects are bumped, there are no other snowmobile or ATV projects in the queue and the money is available. She reiterated that Adams County is still paying the 20% they had agreed to; they are not receiving a windfall.

- Harden said that there is an ATV club there which is very good and works well with the County. The opportunity at this property will be a great asset to the club since much of their existing trails will be lost due to the Plum Creek lands being sold. Harden encouraged the Council to allow this purchase to move forward.
- Much motioned to make an exception to the program's \$45,000 cap for motorized projects in order to contribute 50% of the project cost of the Adams County property. Johnson seconded. Motion was approved.
- Conklin said that all other grant work was going smoothly and processing efficiency has increased recently. Brown and Much thanked Conklin for her work.

12:40 P.M. – DNR Report update

- Brown talked about the Bikeways Plan which is a joint project between the DNR, Bike Fed and the Department of Transportation. The project will include mapping four different U.S. Bike Routes and coming up with turn by turn directions for those four corridors; state-level bike routes are also part of the project. Toole Design Group received the contract to work on the project and right now the parties are in negotiations. Negotiations will hopefully be finalized in the next week.
- Brown then discussed the Madison-Reedsburg rail line. There is a spur off the main line and the plan is that once DOT purchases that line, they would work with the DNR to put trail use on that spur. There is no plan right now for the main line to include a recreational trail, only on the spur. The DNR is very interested in a former bridge across the Wisconsin River because it will serve recreation users.
- Webber asked if the DNR was pretty certain the corridor will be used to develop a trail between Prairie du Sac and Sauk City. Brown said that was unknown. It depends on what the Great Sauk Trail planning commission comes up with. Webber said it would be really nice to have a well-developed trail there because right now there is not a good way to enjoy the river between those two cities.
- Brown said that the department's internal snowmobile program will be revamped soon with changes to forms. Those will be going out for public comment within a few months.
- Brown reported that she has been working on developing a water trails policy and that the draft policy will go out for public comment in about five months.

12:50 P.M. -- State Trails Council member reports

- *Bicycling.* Webber reported that a gravel mine near Elroy was worrying some cyclists. She asked Wilke and Kegel if they had anything to report from this summer's riding season. Wilke said that Milwaukee County was working on mandating permits for any group rides on their trails, particularly the Oak Leaf Trail. Siegert said that the County came out with a draft permit application, but it was long and complicated. They have been trimming and streamlining it. Webber noted how Dane County has done a great job connecting bike trails, specifically designing intersections between those trails. She applauded the construction of a bike trail roundabout in the County. Biermeier asked about the growth of the fat bike industry. Kegel said that the industry is growing and the bikes now are lighter and cheaper. Fat bikes are in many ways replacing full suspension bikes, especially for older users.
- *All-Terrain Vehicles.* Harden reported that UTV sales are increasing strongly. There are still only 27,000-30,000 UTVs in Wisconsin versus 300,000 ATVs, but UTVs are selling a lot more in some



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places than ATVs. There is a large demographic difference between UTVs and ATVs (UTV owners are generally older), but also a lot of UTVs are purchased by people who are not regular trail users. ATV Trail Towns are operating wildly above expectations. They are finding local people wanting some different routes than tourists, so they are working on "preferred routes" which would dissuade tourists from going down spurs or other trails that locals might want to keep more isolated. WATVA is looking to organize trails and routes better by identifying "Trailways". They would number trails/routes to identify whether users are allowed to do certain things.

- *Hiking/Walking.* A lot of work has occurred on the Ice Age Trail and North Country Trail. Volunteer turnout has been the highest ever this year. About thirty volunteers in Waukesha County were expected one workday and 100 showed up. Riders of fat bikes are increasing in usage on IAT and NCT despite not being allowed on most of the segments. Some landowners and managers are upset at the extra damage, especially if they do not stay on the tread.
- *4-Wheel Drive Vehicles.* Four-wheel drive use is slowing down in Wisconsin for the season, though there is still riding on some private property. There was a feasibility study released for a Forest County park, and the County is amending a fifteen year master plan to put this park there. A memorandum of understanding was signed between the Wisconsin Off Road Vehicle Park Incorporated and the Wisconsin Four Wheel Drive Association and the Wisconsin Off-Highway Vehicle Association. The associations would help cut trails if the park comes into existence. There could possibly be 4WD in the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area, and the Menominee River area will be looking at 4WD this spring. Mole Lake jamborees were very good this year. Legislation for a 4WD decal should get reintroduced in 2015. Schneider highlighted an event this year in Langlade County which was very successful. About eight were expected, but they had more than 20 vehicles there. If locations are found, there will be winter runs soon, as well as ice racing.
- *Off-Highway Motorcycles.* The dirt season is coming to an end soon. Ice riding is coming up and people are looking forward to it. There was a large event near Eagle River this fall and the communities really liked it. Some formal dual sport events held in Wabeno and around the northern Kettle Moraine. Both were good, and the Kettle Moraine event was excellent. They put together a lot of private landowners to complete the course. There is a lot of interest in motorcycling in that area, and the huge success of the event shows how much need there is for motorized park in S/SE Wisconsin. All formal events require sound testing. Grants have provided additional sound meters for testing bikes at informal events to increase awareness and ensure compliance with sound levels. Much said his personal experience is that nearly all dual sport bikes are within limits but that many Harley-Davidson street bikes and some other racing bikes that are used on a closed course often exceed highway limits. Much wrote a story for Pure Michigan about motorcycling in the Upper Peninsula and it was well received on social media. It surprised him and now he has a lot better appreciation of social media. It reaches a lot of people who know nothing about the sport or the user group. He will have a piece for Travel Wisconsin in the spring.
- *Water Trails.* Johnsrud spoke and worked with Waupaca County. They have dedicated staff time to mapping and signing water trails there. Johnsrud went down a river with a staff person with a chain saw and cleaned up some of the brush along the waterway. People are already using a three mile section of the river. It's a great success. Cleaning up waterways is very important so that good and safe access is provided.
- *Mountain Biking / Off-Road Bicycles.* Siegert had no report because he incorporated updates into his user group orientation.



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- *Snowmobiling.* Snow conditions last year pushed most counties to supplemental grooming funds. Historically, up to 10 counties were in supplemental fund annually. However, the snowfall in the last few years has many more applying for these funds. Supplemental funds have a cap of \$750/mile/year. Reimbursement of grooming costs is very important to fulfill, Johnson explained. For example, Vilas County is a popular snowmobile area. They get a lot of traffic and do a lot of grooming. We need to work better at getting more money reimbursed for grooming expenses. The Milwaukee Snow Show was held last month at State Fair. It had record attendance. Also, the fall convention/workshop for snowmobile groups was held with 900 people registered. That was an increase of about 200 more than other years. They elected Miss Snow Flake to represent the snowmobile community for promotional events across the state. January has a snowmobile safety week and a proclamation from the governor about that. Celebrate Wisconsin Snowmobile event was pretty successful in 2014 in its inaugural year. In 2015 it will be held on February 8-9 (Sunday-Monday) in Hayward. Johnson surmised that there must be something good going on in Wisconsin recreation and in the economy because everybody before Johnson was commenting on more participation than usual.

Brown said that she's received inquiries lately asking how often snowmobile trails can/should be groomed and asked Johnson to elaborate on that topic. Johnson said grooming takes places based on snow falling as well as usage. Trails that are used more often are groomed more often. Travel Wisconsin is the only official site to look at snow conditions in the state. They get the snow conditions from a representative in each county and they're pretty reliable.

- *Cross-Country Skiing.* McFadzen mentioned that Lapham Peak is the hub of skiing in southern Wisconsin and that this was a nice venue. This is the only site in southern Wisconsin that makes snow for cross-country skiing. It has a great community and a thriving youth group. Construction of a ski shelter at McMiller trails in Southern Kettle Moraine is underway. The Birkebeiner reached its capacity in October (more than 10,000 registrants). The first year they put a cap on it (about four years ago) it filled up in December. Now the race fills up around October. There is going to be a bridge built for the Birkebeiner over a highway, and they are also establishing a permanent start and finish location. The Telemark Lodge in Cable is closed again this year. Rumored renovations are suspended until a new buyer is found. McFadzen then brought up the Nonmotorized Recreation and Transportation Trails Council which just put together a survey. The survey can be found at: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NRTTC_2014_Survey. He then noted that the International Paralympic Committee World Nordic Championship will be held in Cable, WI from January 23 to February 1. It will bring thousands of competitors and spectators to northwest Wisconsin to watch the world's best in a variety of events. All races are open to the public and they plan to accommodate standing and wheelchair spectators. This event is hosted by the Central Cross Country Ski Association (<http://www.excskiing.org/>).
- *Boards/Small Wheels.* There was no small wheels report, though White asked about the NRTTC survey. Buckler assured the Council that the survey is still live and that the link would be sent to the group.
- *Equestrian.* There was no equestrian report, but the prospective appointee, Cricket Jewett, spoke during the public comment period.
- *Tourism/Business.* No report.

1:57 P.M. – Mountain biking / off-road bicycles user group orientation briefing



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- Siegert distributed a handout to Council members and talked about his experience and appreciation of mountain biking. He then discussed the history of mountain biking with its roots in northern California. He showed a trailer for the film ["Klunkerz"](#).
- Siegert elaborated on the history of mountain biking then discussed the history of advocacy. The International Mountain Bicycling Association was created and later the Wisconsin Off-Road Bicycling Association was formed in the state, eventually being incorporated into the Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin. Local groups still work a lot with IMBA and many are IMBA chapters. There are eight IMBA chapters in Wisconsin. They take advantage of the resources of the large organization.
- Webber mentioned that there is a lot of emphasis now on sustainable trail building. The Subaru/IMBA Trail Care Crew has a mantra of keeping people on the trail and keeping water off.
- A trailer for ["Pedal Driven"](#) was shown and Siegert talked about user group cooperation. He advocated following processes and being cooperative. He encouraged new groups to watch "Pedal Driven" and buy IMBA's "Trail Solutions" book.
- Technology developments in mountain biking were discussed, such as carbon fiber and wheel diameters. The group then talked about users of fat bikes and the impacts they do and don't have on snow. There is now a Fat Bike Birkie on the same route as the regular skiing race but held a week later.
- Siegert then closed by showing a trailer for ["Singletrack High"](#) and an educational video for the [Valmont Bike Park](#).

2:42 P.M. – Proposal for moratorium on special use permits for activities not compliant with master plans

- McFadzen introduced the topic of situations in which events are held on trails which are not consistent with uses as set in master plans. The situation which prompted this discussion was an ATV event on the Gandy Dancer State Trail which was successful in 2013, but which expanded its scale in 2014 and some people complained about this to the DNR as well as to local officials. McFadzen said that maybe there should be a resolution encouraging a moratorium on special use permits for activities not compliant with the site's master plan.
- Harden took umbrage with this particular example. Harden agreed that it was an issue in some situations, but that this specific example was not worthy of the resolution. Harden heard that there were no problems with the event, while McFadzen heard otherwise. Webber noted that the specifics of this specific event were inconsequential and that the discussed resolution regarded a general moratorium.
- Biermeier noted that this was a master plan issue and that if a county (which manages the trail) wanted to change uses on the trail, they should follow Chapter NR44 rules.
- Much said that this was an issue which fell through the cracks, but that the rules were already there to handle these situations. The DNR now knows what to do and where mistakes were made and he said a resolution was not needed. Brown explained trail uses on the Gandy Dancer and Much reiterated much of what he had previously said, saying that the DNR had clearly received the message from the STC.
- Siegert asked that if the County did the same thing next year, what would the DNR do? Biermeier and Brown responded that they would put it back onto the counties and put it in writing that if they want to do those events, they have to change their master plans according to Ch. NR44.
- McFadzen made a motion to recommend to the DNR not to grant a special use permit when the permittee is asking to conduct an event that wouldn't be compliant with the property's Master Plan or intended use. Webber seconded the motion. The vote was tied four to four with two abstentions. The motion failed.

3:12 P.M. – Public comment

- Alex Bub of the Wisconsin Off-Highway Motorcycle Association said there has been a lot of activity at the Knobby Ridge motorcycle trails in Clark County. There have been some trails closed because of



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erosion issues and WOHMA has spent three years rehabbing the trails. He and others in WOHMA took the master trail builder class and have been applying those lessons. The local forester inspected everything and said they would open the trails back up in 2015. They will have six miles of regular trails, one mile of kids' trails and a small motocross track. WOHMA has been working at Richard Bong State Recreation Area and have been very happy working with Drew Starch, the park manager there. Bub said that they will approach Starch with the possibility of driving onto frozen ponds at Richard Bong.

- Jim Webber of River Valley Trails noted that the July minutes should reflect that they want money from the Twin Cities. They also are very interested in family oriented trails. Everything is in Minnesota and there are no family oriented trails within 30-40 miles of their area around Hudson. They are currently working a lot with Polk and Pierce counties.
- Krickett Jewett, the prospective equestrian appointee to the STC, introduced herself to everybody. She said that the Wisconsin Horse Council is trying to bring a large horse trail conference to Wisconsin in 2015-16. Also, Palmyra has put in new horse corrals behind their main street to encourage riders to come into town and spend money.

3:21 P.M. – Identify future agenda items

- Update on the DNR's road inventory project
- Trail Town update
- Updates on the STC candidates

3:23 P.M. – Adjourn

- Motion to adjourn by Much. Seconded by Webber. Meeting adjourned.